CLAIMS

1. A computer-aided learning method for a user comprising the steps of:

    retrieving, by a first computer, a user identifier entered by the user;

    determining, by the computer, whether the user is a learning user or an institute user based on the user identifier retrieved;

    permitting, by the computer, the user to access information regarding at least one learning user if the user is an institute user;

    allowing, by the computer, the user to access information regarding learning materials if the user is a learning user, who pays significantly less than an institute user to access information, so as to encourage the learning user to work on learning materials;

    such that information on the user can be tracked and updated.

2. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

    tracking, by the computer, information regarding the user; and

    updating, by the computer, information regarding the user based on the tracked information.

3. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 further comprising the step of ascertaining learning materials for the user to learn if the user is a learning user.

4. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 3 wherein the step of ascertaining depends on the user's educational background, work experience and preferences.

5. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein if the user is a learning user, the step of tracking includes tracking the user's learning activities.

6. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 5 wherein the learning activities tracked includes the duration of time the user learns a subject matter.

7. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 5 wherein:

the user is learning features of a product; and

the activities tracked include the one or more features the user worked on.

8. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein a learning user may restrict institute users from accessing certain information regarding the learning user.

9. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein the institute user accesses the information to identify a learning user for filling a job position.

10. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 9 further comprising the step of querying information of learning users to identify a learning user to fill the job position based on criteria set by the institute user.

11. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 10 wherein the step of querying can be automatically activated due to changes in the criteria set.

12. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 10 further comprising the step of establishing contact between the institute user and the learning user identified.

13. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 further comprising the step of allowing the user to advertise if the user is an institute user.

14. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 13 wherein the advertisement is in at least one of the following areas: a product introduced by the institute user and the institute user's job position to be filled.

15. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 13 wherein the advertisement can be targeted directly to learning users interested in the institute user.

16. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 13 wherein the advertisement is restricted from being presented to other institute users that are in the same field as the institute user.

17. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 13 wherein the advertisement is restricted from being presented to other institute users that sell products similar to the institute user.

18. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein the learning materials includes information on features of a product introduced by an institute user.

19. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein a learning user is paying significantly less than an institute user when the annual payment of the learning user to access information is less than an amount equivalent to 1/500 of the annual payment of the institute user.

20. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein a learning user is paying significantly less than an institute user when it is free for the learning user to access information, while it is not for the institute user.

21. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein a learning user is paying significantly less than an institute user when the learning user, to access information, is paying approximately the per capita cost of operating the computer, and the institute user, to access information, is paying above the per capita cost of operating the computer.

22.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein a learning user is paying significantly less than an institute user when the learning user, to access information, is paying below the per capita cost of operating the computer, and the institute user, to access information, is paying above the per capita cost of operating the computer.

23.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein the user receives the information accessed from a second computer, which is connected to the first computer by a network.

24.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 2 wherein the method is implemented at a Web site.

25.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 7 wherein the method is implemented at a Web site.

26.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 9 wherein the method is implemented at a Web site.

27.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 13 wherein the method is implemented at a Web site.

28.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 27 further comprising the step of monitoring the number of times the institute user's advertising page has been accessed.

29.   A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 21 wherein the method is implemented at a Web site.

30. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 22 wherein the method is implemented at a Web site.

31. A computer-aided learning method as recited in claim 1 wherein information regarding the at least one learning user is categorized into confidential and non-confidential such that confidential information is not accessible by the institute user without the at least one learning user's express consent.

32. A computer-aided learning apparatus for a user comprising:
   a retriever configured to retrieve a user identifier entered by the user; and
   a determinator configured to determine whether the user is a learning user or an institute user based on the user identifier retrieved, for allowing the user to access information regarding
       at least one learning user if the user is an institute user, and
       learning materials if the user is a learning user, who pays significantly less than an institute user to access information, so as to encourage the learning user to work on learning materials;
   such that information on the user can be tracked and updated.

33. A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 32 further comprising:
   a tracker configured to track information regarding the user; and
   an updater configured to update information regarding the user based on the tracked information.

34. A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 33 further comprising a learning materials ascertainer configured to ascertain learning materials for the user to learn if the user is a learning user.

35. A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 34 wherein the institute user accesses the information to identify a learning user for filling a job position.

36.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 35 further comprising an advertisement generator configured to allow the user to advertise if the user is an institute user.

37.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 36 wherein:
the learning materials include information on features of a product introduced by an institute user; and
information regarding a learning user includes the learning user's interest in the product.

38.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 32 wherein a learning user is paying significantly less than an institute user when it is free for the learning user to access information, while it is not for the institute user.

39.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 32 wherein a learning user is paying significantly less than an institute user when the learning user, to access information, is paying approximately the per capita cost of operating the apparatus, and the institute user, to access information, is paying above the per capita cost of operating the apparatus.

40.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 32 wherein a learning user is paying significantly less than an institute user when the learning user, to access information, is paying below the per capita cost of operating the apparatus, and the institute user, to access information, is paying above the per capita cost of operating the apparatus.

41.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 39 wherein the apparatus is implemented at a Web site.

42.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 40 wherein the apparatus is implemented at a Web site.

43.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 32 wherein the user receives the information accessed from a computer, which is connected to the apparatus by a network.

44.   A computer-aided learning apparatus as recited in claim 32 wherein information regarding the at least one learning user is categorized into confidential and non-confidential such that confidential information is not accessible by the institute user without the at least one learning user's express consent.